

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: <b>Illinois</b>	
COUNTY: <b>Cook</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

**1. NAME**

COMMON:  
**Fisher Building**

AND/OR HISTORIC:

**2. LOCATION**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**343 South Dearborn Street**

CITY OR TOWN:  
**Chicago**

STATE: **Illinois**      CODE:      COUNTY: **Cook**      CODE:     

**3. CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____
			Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

**4. OWNER OF PROPERTY**

OWNER'S NAME:  
**American National Bank and Trust Company, Trust #30473**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**33 North LaSalle Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Chicago**      STATE: **Illinois**      CODE:     

**5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
**Cook County Recorder of Deeds**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**228 North LaSalle Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Chicago**      STATE: **Illinois**      CODE:     

**6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
**Historic American Building Survey**

DATE OF SURVEY:       Federal     State     County     Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
**Library of Congress**

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: **Washington**      STATE: **D.C.**      CODE:     

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:	
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FOR NPS USE ONLY

## 7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

## ORIGINAL CONDITION

## First Phase.

The first phase of the building is an eighteen story structure with one basement, and is supported on spread footings above 25 foot driven piles. The skeletal framework is steel, and the sheathing is terra cotta and glass exclusively. The east and west facades have eight bays, and the south facade has five.

The first two floors form a base with a two story decorative entrance on the south (Van Buren) face, a simpler entrance on the west (Dearborn) face, and a service entry on the east (Plymouth Court) side. The ground floor has shop windows, and the second floor has large, plate glass openings lighting offices.

Each of the third through the sixteenth floors is the same, with every other bay breaking out in the oriel. In each flat bay is a pair of narrow windows. In each oriel a slightly broader window is flanked by a narrower window on the canted sides. All these windows are double hung.

The seventeenth floor, like the one above, has a flat surface. Here, arched double hung thermal windows provide a termination for the strong vertical emphasis of the tiers of floors below. Above, in the top floor, are three double hung windows in each bay, and above them, an elaborate tracery terminating in an elaborate cornice.

Remarkable in the building is the vast extent of the glazing and the sparing use of terra cotta. Equally remarkable is the variety of forms found in the terra cotta, many derived from late Gothic designs. Salamanders and eagles crouch and perch along the top. Crabs, fish, and shells are lodged near the bottom. Foliate elements and curved mouldings ornament the spandrels. And colonnettes stress the verticality of the piers and frame the second floor windows and Van Buren entrance.

Inside, four elevators were bunched in groups of two on the north end, opening to a long central corridor with marble and wood finishing.

## Second phase.

Added to the north of the building was a three-bay, twenty story addition with a basement and similar foundations. It has a flat facade and repeats the vertical divisions, extending the pattern of the eighteenth floor through the next two, and terminating in a matching cornice. Internally, it added two more groups of two elevators facing one another across the longitudinal corridor.

## PRESENT CONDITION

Externally, little has been altered except for the conversion of the Van Buren entrance into a shop and a remodelling of the Dearborn entrance. Internally, only the lobby and the elevators have been changed, except that the two east elevators in the first phase section have been preserved

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(Continuation Sheet)

STATE <b>Illinois</b>	
COUNTY <b>Cook</b>	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

(Number all entries)

No. 6 cont'd

Illinois Historic Structures Survey (state)  
1972  
Department of Conservation  
605 State Office Building  
Springfield, Illinois

Commission on Chicago Historical and Architectural Landmarks (local)  
1972  
320 North Clark Street, Room 800  
Chicago, Illinois

Landmarks Preservation Council and Service (local)  
1974  
407 South Dearborn Street  
Chicago, Illinois

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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*(Continuation Sheet)*

STATE Illinois	
COUNTY Cook	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

*(Number all entries)*

No. 7 Cont'd  
intact above the first floor. The other two elevators in the first phase section have been removed, and the four in the second phase enclosed and modernized. The recent renovation of the lobby preserves much of the original trim. The building was cleaned recently, restoring the appearance of the salmon-colored terra cotta.

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*(Continuation Sheet)*

STATE Illinois	
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No. 8 Cont'd

The building is also important for its structural system, designed by E. C. Shankland, another member of Burnham's firm who collaborated on the Reliance. The skeleton is steel. A record breaking seventeen floors were erected in a month's time. The building was occupied nine months after ground breaking, surely a clear demonstration of technical proficiency in a construction technique developed rapidly in the previous few years. Burnham's firm ceaselessly was capable of such feats.

The 1907 addition by Peter Weber acknowledges the basic soundness of the original building's design. Weber added a complementary rather than a competing structure, filling out the volume of the original with space that allows the ensemble to continue to accommodate its original functions.

The building is also important as a conspicuous part of the thin slab district at the south end of the Chicago Loop. Its structural system and building envelope is very similar to that of its immediate neighbors, the Old Colony and Monadnock Block South, both by Holabird and Roche in 1893, illustrating the variety of forms possible within the strict confines of the then-prevalent style. Within the more extensive thin slab district, the building provides an essential element of architectural design and historical continuity and homogeneity.

## SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian!       16th Century       18th Century       20th Century  
 15th Century       17th Century       19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1895-96; 1907

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- |  |   |  |  |
|--|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal              | <input type="checkbox"/> Education              | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic                | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry               | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture             | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention              | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           | _____  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature             | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce                | <input type="checkbox"/> Military               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      | _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications          | <input type="checkbox"/> Music                  |  |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation            |   |  |  |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The product of Burnham and Company's office after the death of John W. Root (1891), the building was designed when Daniel H. Burnham (1846-1912) was consolidating his office into a model for subsequent corporate architectural firms. The building is important for its architectural character, its structural and technical systems, and the place within the urban fabric that it occupies.

This cage of steel with terra cotta and glass is an important part of the Chicago School of architecture, the important early style of modern architecture. It simply and frankly reveals the openness of its skeletal steel framework, allowing extensive windows to remain within the richly colored and decorated terra cotta cladding. The decoration relieves the design of any possible monotony, as does the use of the structural technique to create oriels along the facades. Especially notable is the fact that on the south facade the outer bays are flat, while on the east and west facades the outer bays have oriels, allowing the flanking corner bays to form contrasts with one another. A regular steel framework, a cladding for fire-proofing and extensive fenestration set within the open grid is characteristic of almost all subsequent high-rise construction, but more recent buildings lack the variety and decorative appeal of this early monument.

The profuse decoration in terra cotta is most certainly the work of Charles Atwood (1849-95), a designer the previous year of the upper floors of the Reliance Building. Atwood had previously worked in New York, and that city had a greater proclivity to use Gothic forms in high rise buildings. But the forms fit a Chicago tradition as well. Carter, Drake, and Wight and others had done many "Venetian Gothic" buildings during the fifteen years after the Fire of 1871, and the Chicago Tribune accepted a Gothic design provided by the New Yorkers, Raymond Hood and John M. Howells, in its famous competition of 1922. Atwood's forms do not disturb the Chicago School style which requires a clear evocation of the structural system. Thus, the Fisher differs fundamentally from his other historically derived designs, for example at the Neo-Classical Fine Arts Building at the 1893 Columbian Exposition (now rebuilt as the Museum of Science and Industry) or the Romanesque-Renaissance Marshall Field Annex (northwest corner of Wabash and Washington, 1892).

One justification for the decorative forms is perhaps given by the quantity of aquatic animals probably meant as visual puns on the name of the developer, Lucius G. Fisher. The fish etched on the original, and surviving, entrance doors and metal work in the lobby are explicit.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Frank A. Randall, History of the Development of Building Construction in Chicago, Urbana, 1949.  
 Carl Condit, The Chicago School of Architecture, Chicago 1954.  
 Hugh C. Miller, The Chicago School of Architecture, National Park Service, Washington, 1973.  
 Thomas S. Hines, Burnham of Chicago, New York, 1974

**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"
NE	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"
SE	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"
SW	° ' "	° ' "		°	'	"

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than one

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
**Carroll William Westfall**

ORGANIZATION: **Landmarks Preservation Council**      DATE: **August 8, 1975**

STREET AND NUMBER:  
**407 South Dearborn Street**

CITY OR TOWN: **Chicago**      STATE: **Illinois**      CODE:

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National       State       Local

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
 Keeper of The National Register

Date \_\_\_\_\_

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

ILLINOIS HISTORIC SITES SURVEY INVENTORY

CK-H - 1

✓ 200607

1. Name of Site:

Common Fisher Building

Historic

2. Location:

Street and Number 343 South Dearborn

Township

Section

City or Town Chicago

Zip Code

Range

1/4 Section

County Cook

3. Classification:

Category (check one)

Integrity (check one)

District  Building  
 Site  Structure

Altered  Unaltered  
 Moved  Original Site

4. Ownership:

Status (check one)

Private  
 Public

Occupied  
 Unoccupied  
 Preservation work in progress

Access to Public

Yes  Restricted  Unrestricted  No

Present Use (check one or more)

Agricultural  Industrial  Religious  
 Commercial  Military  Scientific  
 Educational  Museum  Transportation  
 Entertainment  Park  Other  
 Government  Private Residence

5. Ownership of Property:

Owner's Name

Phone Number

Street and Number

City or Town

State

County

Zip Code

6. Description:

Excellent  Good  Fair  Deteriorated  
 Ruins  Unexposed

Is there a program of preservation underway?  Yes  No ?

ARCHITECTURE



7. Historical Themes: (check one or more of the following)

- |   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological Site        | (Pre-Columbian)          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Archaeological Site        | (Post-Columbian to 1673) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> French Influence           | (1673-1780)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Frontier          | (1780-1818)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Early             | (1818-1850)              |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illinois Middle | (1850-1900)              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Illinois Late              | (1900-present)           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Famous People              | (give names & dates)     |

8. Specific Date: 1896

Areas of significance (check one or more of the following)

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal (historic)     | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal (pre-historic) | <input type="checkbox"/> Military            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture               | <input type="checkbox"/> Music               |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture   | <input type="checkbox"/> Political           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce       | <input type="checkbox"/> Science             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communication             | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation              | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Education                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering               | <input type="checkbox"/> Transportation      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Industry                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Invention                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify)     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture    |  |

Brief statement of significance: (include all names and dates)

Use additional sheets if necessary. D. H. Burnham & Co.

Cited by Chicago Landmarks Comm.

9. Form prepared by:

Name and Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 6/24/75

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Street and Number: \_\_\_\_\_

City or Town: \_\_\_\_\_

County: \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

During the course of the Survey we often find it necessary to search for a particular site. When filling out the Survey form, please list according to the following example, published references to the site for which forms are being completed. If a bibliography can be compiled, it will greatly deduct from the Survey's task.

Bibliography

Robertson, Robert, Of Whales and Men. New York, Alfred K. Knopf, Inc., 1954.

CHS



FISHER BLDG.

OFFICE SPACE  
AVAILABLE  
FISHER  
BUILDING